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FRANCES FITZGERALD, 26. One of the youngest of the new faces, she already has written for The New York Times Sunday magazine, The Atlantic, The Village Voice and Vogue. A 1962 Radcliffe graduate, she has the social credentials to make the news rather than report it (her mother is Marietta Tree, former U.S. representative to the U.N. Trusteeship Council, her father, Desmond FitzGerald, a Central Intelligence Agency official). Instead, the tall, slender Miss FitzGerald decided to pay her own way to Vietnam. "I was scared about going out with the generals in helicopters," she recalls, "because they'd fly where someone could hit them." Back in Saigon, Frankie FitzGerald often spent her evenings with friends at embassies, sometimes at small dances. "We were fiddling slightly while Rome burned," she says.

In an article in Vogue this month on "the fragile but dominating women of Vietnam," she writes: "Perhaps because the alternative was too fearful to contemplate, [the Americans] dismissed Mme. Nhu as an exception, as a monstrous aberration from the stereotype of the submissive Oriental woman. In truth,

she was the norm."